

“Revolution in Training”



Executive Review of Navy Training

August 8, 2001

ERNT

VII. Epilogue

It is April 2028 and ETCM (SW/AW) Mary Kelliher, Commander Second Fleet's Command Master Chief, is one of six finalists in the selection process for Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy. She has just returned from her week of interviews with the Chief of Naval Operations and his staff. It was a wonderful experience, and she is deeply honored to have been chosen as a finalist. These thoughts, along with the cold night and a warm fire, allow Master Chief Kelliher to doze off slowly and reflect; she recalls the improbable circumstances that have brought her to this point in her career - What a Ride!!

In December 2003, a much younger Mary Kelliher had walked into Navy Recruiting Station Houston East to join the Navy. The recruiter, Petty Officer Jim Jackson, gave her a Learning Profile, Personality, and Interest Assessment. With that, he determined that Mary would be good in the electronics field, that she preferred to receive information visually, and that she processed information in a concrete-sequential manner (by the numbers). This profile information was transmitted to the Profile Assessment Branch of the Bureau of Naval Personnel (BUPERS). Based on the date Mary chose to begin Boot Camp, a set of orders was generated in a matter of minutes by the BUPERS intelligent software systems. Petty Officer Jackson was empowered to confirm orders and ship recruits using the decision aids provided by BUPERS and Commander, Navy Recruiting and Recruit Training Command. Before she left for Recruit Training, Mary's computer skills and personal financial knowledge were also assessed. A Navy eLearning Computer Based Training (CBT) regimen was prescribed to bring her up to basic Navy standards in several learning areas prior to Boot Camp. She was surprised at how Petty Officer Jackson mentored her during this process. Largely because of his interest and support, she successfully finished her CBT program and also pursued Navy Orientation via the CYBER Delayed Entry Program (DEP) site; she used both an online and CD interactive course of instruction. She earned 400+ points, which made her eligible for E-2 immediately upon completing Boot Camp. She was really excited! One week prior to shipping, Petty Officer Jackson introduced Recruit Kelliher to her Recruit Division Commander (RDC), Petty Officer Joan Cartwright, via her personal CYBER DEP webpage. This was the first of many "mentor handoffs" of Mary Kelliher's career. After an exchange of e-mails, Petty Officer Cartwright got to know Mary pretty well, and vice versa. Mary was ready to start learning!

Petty Officer Cartwright met Mary as she left the bus. Boot Camp was personal but extremely challenging and the ultimate sailorization process. Petty Officer Cartwright and the other RDCs really tested them! The graduation exercise in Battle Stations took place in a virtual reality, Universal studios-type facility; the recruits were immersed in scenarios from historic Navy battles and accidents; they were cold and wet in damage control scenarios. Mary's mettle truly was tested. The Battle Stations graduation is etched in her mind today as one of the defining moments of her life. For the first time, she had successfully completed a challenging program. Tears flowed that day long ago during a very patriotic recognition ceremony. She now was SA Kelliher! Then she remembered many things happening at once. She and her shipmates were presented with personal computing appliances—each with his or her Personal Portable WebPages (PPW). The page was already loaded with their career training plans, the beginnings of Personal Learning Plans, electronic training jackets, education roadmaps, personnel files, pay and allowances information, etc., and a personal "Welcome to the Navy" video clip from Admiral Vern Clark, the Chief of Naval Operations. Wow!! Petty Officer Cartwright conducted a mentor

handoff with SA Kelliher's instructor for initial skills training, Petty Officer Bill "Red" Butler, who contacted SA Kelliher on her PPW.

She started electronics school in a self-paced course of instruction, tailored to her learning style. Her computer and reading literacy skills were continuously enhanced via intelligent tutors in her interactive courseware (ICW). By the time SA Kelliher arrived at her initial school, her basic electronics course had now become version 33, reflecting the new technology in the Fleet. Her friend Tiffany, who joined three months ago, had learned on version 32. The Human Performance System's Knowledge Factory had been able to revise and produce the latest version in less than two weeks. Using learning templates, the 21st century human performance specialists and contracted graphic artists had done great work. Her ICW helped her achieve a 100-percent mastery of the Fleet requirements for a Seaman Apprentice in electronics. The final exam in her course assessed her knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) to perform certain tasks.

A communications channel was established between her school and her first Fleet command; her new work center supervisor was provided a profile of SA Kelliher. The supervisor would also be expected to send reports to her school on her performance at various intervals throughout her first tour. SA Kelliher's performance was then to be compared with that of other electronics-school graduates, allowing continuous improvement in the school's course of instruction. Her PPW was updated with information about her first ship and she took a virtual tour. Petty Officer Butler introduced SA Kelliher to her Leading Petty Officer (LPO), ET1 Mark Dougherty, via her PPW. She also received a note via her PPW from the Commanding Officer, her Division Officer, and the Command Master Chief.

Upon graduation from her initial skills course, now ETSA Kelliher earned 25 college credits for her training. She also enrolled in the Navy College Program (NCP) online with one of the designated colleges for Electronics Technicians. This would be her Partner University. ETSA Kelliher reported aboard USS BONHOMME RICHARD (BHR) and was immediately assigned to her work center where she spent her first 12 months working in her division on electronics tasks that helped cement her learning. During this first year, General Military Training (GMT) and some of her core values training were provided in a scenario-based, highly interactive CD or web-based course in which she was tested frequently on her knowledge and decision-making. This interactive course was facilitated by her LPO, ET1 Dougherty, who was a formally trained and qualified Afloat Training Specialist. ET1 Dougherty told ETSA Kelliher how lucky she was to receive this interactive training. In the old days, ET1 would have read GMT lectures to the people of her work center while they sat on the deck plates.

ETSA Kelliher's Division Officer was LTJG Sam Cunningham, a Naval Academy graduate. She remembers how impressed she was with LTJG Cunningham's demeanor and leadership skills. He had been aboard 30 months and was an energetic and enthusiastic leader. He had been selected for Department Head School. He related how he was the first of a group of Surface Warfare Officers to report aboard his ship pre-qualified and certified. LTJG Cunningham had benefited from advanced simulation and virtual-reality trainers at Surface Warfare Officers' school. He said that he had "virtually qualified" on BONHOMME RICHARD's bridge before he ever saw the ship. The Commanding Officer, of course, granted his final qualifications in all watch stations.

During ETSA Kelliher's first sea tour, her ship received three different versions of the electronic equipment for which she was responsible. She could update her skills immediately, however,

using either Computer Based Training (CBT) in a reconfigurable classroom ashore, or by using the training system embedded in the equipment. Sailors who reported after ETSA Kelliher received training on these new versions prior to their arriving aboard, because the OPNAV training resource sponsor controlled all training funding and imposed discipline on the Systems Commands. The SYSCOMs were required to provide the new versions' training equipment to the schoolhouses and the Fleet concentration area reconfigurable classrooms before the first shipboard installation took place. ETSA Kelliher was promoted to ETSN.

Within 18 months of her reporting on board, USS BONHOMME RICHARD deployed. During the deployment, one of the newly installed pieces of electronic gear that ETSN Kelliher was responsible for maintaining suffered a casualty. After consulting with her LPO and reviewing the technical manuals on their shipboard Navy Virtual Library (NVL) system, neither of them could resolve the problem. NVL was an integrated shipboard server library, which provided Sailors access to information via either computers in the shipboard spaces or their personal computing appliances. A great deal of material was easily accessible. Technical, educational, training, medical, Information Technology (IT), entertainment, and resource information was all there. ETSN Kelliher and her LPO entered the NAVSEA Distant Support Portal and, via Collaboration-at-Sea (a knowledge management system), linked to a 24/7 waterfront browser support center ashore via their chat room. After a brief exchange with the browser support center, the center referred ETSN Kelliher's problem to a "server center" of industry experts linked to Navy trainers. The server center helped resolve the problem. A performance deficiency (training in this case) was also identified, since ETSN Kelliher and her LPO actually used her CBT module to troubleshoot the problem, to no avail. This deficiency was immediately fed back to the schoolhouse and curriculum control authority. They worked with the Human Performance System's consultants and made the necessary changes. These changes were not only made in the schoolhouse, but, after validation, were transmitted Navy-wide within the week to the PPW of each ET who needed the knowledge, skills, and ability codes. ETSN Kelliher quickly went online via her PPW to take the updated training via her shipboard version of NAVY eLearning. Because the LPO had access to a Learning Management System, he monitored her progress and that of each Sailor in the work center.

During the deployment, ETSN Kelliher competed for advancement to E-4. She took her (computer-based) examination 14 September. The exam not only tested her theoretical knowledge of electronics principles, but also gave her a rigorous troubleshooting regimen to deal with (performance metrics). She also responded to Navy heritage questions and leadership problem vignettes. Her advancement package was sent electronically to the Naval Education and Training Professional Development and Technology Center, and results were returned to the ship by 28 September. She was advanced. She now was a leader and was given new responsibilities, plus three Sailors to supervise. Her LPO reviewed and revised her Personal Learning Plan with her. He also set up a scenario-based, interactive leadership course on her personal webpage. Since leadership training is personal and dynamic, her LPO also facilitated this course of instruction. ET3 Kelliher also completed six semester hours online via the NCP during the deployment. Her books were uploaded onto the Navy Virtual Library server on board her ship and could be accessed only by her via her personal webpage.

She now was approaching three years time in service, and her LPO said he wanted Mary to go to an advanced electronics school. School theory was provided to Mary online via Navy eLearning courses on her webpage. One month after the ship returned to homeport, Mary remembers walking down the pier to the residential portion of her advanced school and, within two months, not only being awarded a new KSA code, but also an Associates Degree in Electronics Technology from her Partner University in the Navy College Program. The University awarded

Mary college credits for all of her Navy training, and the liberal arts courses she took before and during deployment.

Within four years ET3 Kelliher had been advanced to E-5. During her first shipboard tour, she also qualified as an Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist. The warfare qualification program was tough and challenging, especially the engineering portion. The training teams set up virtual-reality scenarios, wherein she had to literally fight to save the ship. In essence it was a super Battle Stations. The training team placed sensors in key spots throughout the ship that simulated fires, flooding, damaged equipment, broken steam lines, electrical cables, etc., for her final qualification exercise. She and the other Sailors who were being tested donned virtual-reality helmets and were graded, not only on their individual knowledge and skills, but also on their ability to work as a team. She excelled—she was now ET2 (Surface Warfare) Kelliher. One CPO noted that this new training was a lot better than “Mr. Fire” and “Mr. Smoke,” the red and black flags that were the extent of the training devices available in the past.

She was now right on track with her Career Training Plan (CTP) that she and her LPO had worked out and posted on her personal webpage when she reported to BHR. This plan was, for her, a roadmap all the way to Master Chief. However, she now found herself at a career crossroads because her fiancé wanted to get married and was ambivalent about being a Navy spouse. She went home on Hometown Area Recruiting Program (HARP) duty to make career and life decisions. During her two weeks of HARP duty, she began to notice that her almost five years in the Navy had changed her. In comparison with her classmates, she was more worldly and urbane. While her classmates talked about the latest bazaar, old boyfriends, and rehashed high school stories, ET2 (SW) Kelliher talked about Hong Kong, Singapore, her leadership challenges, and the great Navy training and education from which she was benefiting. She also noticed that her values had changed. She was convinced—she would stay Navy. Now the hard part: convince Tom. She shared her Career Training Plan and Personal Learning Plan with him and was honest with him that the Navy was a challenging, rewarding career for her. She told him that life would be a journey and there would be no better place to be in the first half of that journey than the United States Navy. Tom finally agreed. Plus, he was excited because he was interested in Information Technology (IT) and, as a spouse, would also be able to take courses free via Navy eLearning. He could see that professional certification was in his future as a Navy spouse.

Back on board, ET2 (SW) Kelliher looked at the BUPERS link on her PPW and saw that, in 18 months, just about the time of her planned rotation, a billet for an ET1 (SW) in Rota Spain would be available. She had always wanted to have an assignment in Rota so that she and Tom could travel in Europe. However, the billet would require her to have KSA 3344, which she then did not possess. She searched the courses offered on Navy eLearning and determined that she could earn KSA 3344 online, and the average time to complete the course was about 4 months. She immediately applied through her PPW for both this billet and for the KSA courses. Her next hurdle would be to make E-6; she was up for E-6 in 6 months and made it. Although she had her Associates Degree, she wanted to enhance her training and education portfolio, and her chances for landing the Rota billet. So she enrolled in two courses—Spanish, and Intercultural Relations. She completed both these courses with her Partner University via the Navy College Program (NCP). Immediately upon finishing these courses, she saw that her training and education portfolio was updated, and the detailer had automatically been notified. The detailer looked at her portfolio and compared it to the four other Sailors bidding for the same billet. He selected ET1 (SW) Kelliher for the job, based on the strong endorsement from her chain of command and the breadth and depth of the portfolio she had worked hard to build.

After Rota, ET1 (SW) Kelliher needed a training tour to round out her career and make her competitive for E-7. She bid for ET school in Great Lakes. During this tour, she became a Master Training Specialist (MTS). She also ran into now LCDR Cunningham, her first Division Officer. He was in a highly coveted training tour at Great Lakes. He told her he had completed his Masters Degree and was selected early for Commander. He was then en route to his new assignment as Executive Officer (he would fleet-up to Commanding Officer (CO)) tour aboard USS WINSTON CHURCHILL. He said he was concerned about this new fleet-up career progression in the Surface Warfare community, but admitted that from a warfighting perspective it made sense, since he would relieve the current CO in the middle of deployment in the Middle East in approximately 18 months.

ET1 (SW) Kelliher asked for a split tour to the afloat training segment of the Integrated Training Organization; she used that opportunity to become a formally trained Afloat Training Specialist (ATS). As an ATS, she learned how to employ training tools, the science of learning, and various learning models to train Sailors and teams aboard ships in the full gamut of learning, from tailored individual training programs to complex shipboard warfighting and damage control scenarios. During this tour, she earned her khaki (was selected for Chief Petty Officer) and eventually completed her Bachelor's degree. Her Master Chief told ETC (select) (SW) Kelliher that she was a hot runner because she was well ahead of her contemporaries on her Career Training Plan and in her Personal Learning Plan. Her next assignment was as a leading Chief Petty Officer aboard USS GEORGE WASHINGTON. Aboard GW, she qualified as an Enlisted Aviation Warfare Specialist and made E-8. Her CO recommended her for the E-8 Academy, which was taught for five months online with other E-8s, followed by a two-week residency program in a fleet concentration area. After three years aboard GEORGE WASHINGTON, ETCS (SW/AW) Kelliher was offered the dream of a lifetime—an opportunity to earn her Master's degree in electronics with an IT subspecialty at Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) in Monterey. Following NPS, ETCS (SW/AW) Kelliher was offered an “externship” at a Silicon Valley company for one year to further hone her subspecialty skills. Her husband Tom was also excited, since he had become an IT specialist and would do well to spend a year in Silicon Valley. All of those Navy eLearning certification courses had really enhanced his career also. Mary recalls now how her “employability” had been enhanced by the Navy’s investment in her learning, and how she felt especially loyal to the Navy for having the confidence in her to give her these opportunities.

Back to sea, and ETCM (SW/AW) Kelliher.

She recalls now her first tour as a Master Chief and how proud her husband and parents were to learn that she had been chosen for the Command Master Chief (CMC) program. She remembers her first leadership challenges as a CMC aboard USS MASON (DDG 87). She recalls that she was well prepared for these challenges (an on-line course called “Situational Leadership” had really helped). She had two excellent CMC tours before reporting to Second Fleet. As her dream takes her through the challenges and rewards of those tours . . . the phone rings. It's Washington.